

REMARKS

By the present amendment, Applicant proposes to amend Claims 1, 4 and 15, and cancel Claims "2," 11, 13, 14 and 18. Claims "3," 12 and 16 have been canceled by the previously amendment. Upon entry of the proposed amendment, Claims 1, 4, 5-10, 15, 17, 19 and 20 will remain pending in the present application for consideration. Claims 1 and 15 are independent claims.

In the recent Office Action the Examiner objected to Claim 2. Claims 1, 5, 6, 11, 13-15, 19 and 20 stand finally rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawashima et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,764,371), in view of Liang (U.S. Patent No. 5,867,586), and further in view of Segev et al. (U.S. Pub. No. 2002/0087861 A1). Claims 2, 4, 7-10, 17 and 18 were indicated by the Examiner as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and of any intervening claims.

The Examiner correctly noted that Claim "2" as presented in the previous amendment is not the same as original Claim 2. In fact, Claim "2" corresponds to original Claim 3. In any event, the proposed cancellation and Claim "2" by the present amendment and the cancellation of Claim 3 by the previous amendment should serve to obviate this particular ground of objection. Applicant further notes that Claims 6-10 as presented in the previous amendment were incorrectly identified as

“Previously Presented” instead of *-- Original --*. This inadvertent error in the status identifier of the instant claims has been corrected by the present amendment.

The Examiner’s indication of allowable subject matter is noted with appreciation. In this regard, Applicant has amended independent Claim 1 to incorporate the allowable subject matter of Claim “2”. The dependency of Claim 4 has been changed to now depend from Claim -- 1--. Independent Claim 15 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of Claim 18. For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that independent Claims 1 and 15, as amended, and corresponding dependent Claims 4, 5-10, and 17, 19 and 20 are allowable over the prior art of record. Also, the cancellation of Claims 11, 13 and 14 by the present amendment renders the prior art rejection of these particular claims moot.

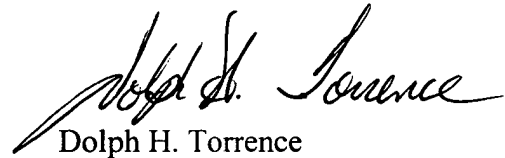
Applicant respectfully submits that the proposed amendments made herein properly respond to the outstanding Final Rejection and represent a *bona fide* effort to satisfactorily conclude the prosecution of this application.. Care has been exercised to insure that no new matter has been introduced and that no new issues have been raised that would require further consideration or search. It is felt that no inordinate amount of time will be required on the part of the Examiner to review and consider this amendment. Accordingly, entry of the proposed amendment is respectfully requested.

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For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance upon entry of the proposed amendment. If such is not the case, the Examiner is requested to kindly contact the undersigned in an effort to satisfactorily conclude the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dolph H. Torrence". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial "D".

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